Interview with Eugenia McQuatters and Ella DeSchaub

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

EUGENIA McQUATTERS and ELLA DeSCHAUB

Interviewed by: Randolph W. Baxter

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McQUATTERS: Do you have any special questions you wanted to ask?

Q: I'll like to start, at first, in general. You mentioned that you were from Los Angeles — how did you go from Los Angeles to Paris, and then to Warsaw?

McQUATTERS: Oh, well, that is a long story. I went to Paris and was living there after I graduated from USC. I went with two friends to Europe, and we had a very good time. I had an allowance from my father, and they had allowances, too — we just had a fine time [laughs] — we could do anything! I remember saying to my father that I was so glad he was sending my allowance which allowed me to live over there, because, after all, I was getting very old — I think I was about twenty two! [laughs]

I lived there and traveled all around, and one by one, one girl came home to get married, and the other girl came home to get married, but I stayed there. I had decided that it would be a good idea to try to learn some French, and so I did [laughs]. I went to the Alliance Fran#ais, then to the Sorbonne, and I was preparing also for my Ph.D. at the Sorbonne. The Rector of the University had accepted my subject, but just at that time, my father died,

so I had to come back. I never did write my thesis I have all the credits, but I never wrote the thesis. Don't let that happen to you! [both laugh]

I came back and everything was in turmoil, and I had to find some work to do. Eventually, I — well, I have quite a large family: I have two sisters and three brothers, so there were three girls and three boys in my family — and one of my sisters was married to a West Point man, and they had been stationed in Honolulu, and they were coming back through Los Angeles. My sister was not awfully well, so my brother-in-law said, “You come back to Washington” — 'cause he was appointed to Washington - "and see what you could do.”

So I did that. He was Deputy Chief of Air Corps in Washington, and he was pretty busy. Well eventually — I really had had a good education but I really didn't know how to do anything — did that ever happen to you? Do you know many people like that?

Q: Depending on the subject, yes!

McQUATTERS: You know, you have no — no skills! And so, I finally got some skills in typing and shorthand, and then I made an application for the Foreign Service. I wanted to be an Officer. But when I saw some of the examinations that they give you to look at, I thought, “Oh, my word, it'll take me forever to learn enough to — and I don't want to do that.” So I asked the man if there was some other way that I could get into the Foreign Service. He said, “Well yes, you can apply to be a Clerk of the Foreign Service,” they called it, or a Clerk of the Consulate.

So I applied to be a Clerk. I passed a little test of typing, and shorthand. Then I got a job with a Senator from Arizona, and I worked with him for about six months, and during that time I kept asking and asking, “Well, how's my application going?” And finally — I guess they got tired of it — they said, “Yes, it has come through — now you're going to, you've been appointed to Warsaw.” And I must say, that I did not even know where it was — at that time! [laughs long] That was my first post, and really, about the only one I had.

Q: When would you have left, then, to Warsaw?

McQUATTERS: Oh, I think, it was December, no, November '36 — [pause] — yes. The ambassador who was there, or the former ambassador who was there was going out, and Mr. Biddle was coming in. But I didn't know that he was coming in; I just knew the other one was going out. They put me in the file room. The man who was in the file room was so anxious to get away - he wanted to get out of Warsaw - [that] he left about the day I got there. [laughs] So I had to really work hard to find out what the file room really consisted of.

Soon after that — a few months after that — Ambassador Biddle came. [Biddle was named by President Roosevelt to be U.S. Ambassador to Poland on April 6, 1937, was confirmed in May and arrived in Warsaw on June 2, 1937.] That's when he asked if I would do his confidential work, and I said yes — that's the way it happened. I was very very pleased, because, I really worked — you had no hours — you just had to work at that was all there was to it. At the beginning, it was fairly quiet, but after awhile, it began to get fairly tense, and there was the feeling of an oncoming conflict, you might say.

Ambassador Biddle had a lot of work to do, and he went to the Foreign Office and to various others — he made wonderful contacts in Warsaw. You certainly have read all those — from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, [The 1976 Biddle Report book contained several letters and cables Biddle had sent to President Roosevelt and the State Department which detailed the diplomatic situation leading up to the Nazi invasion. McQuatters was particularly interested in the compilation, since she had originally typed Biddle's hand-written notes for his various cables and letters!] and — [pause] ...

Q: [Polish Foreign Minister] J#zef Beck?

McQUATTERS: Beck turned out to be not what he was supposed to be, I think.

Q: What was your impression of Beck? Because he's been alternately ...

McQUATTERS: Well, at that time, I thought that he was a fine, brilliant man — he was certainly very fine. And it was only later that we learned that he wasn't one hundred percent for the Poles. But the Poles were really wonderful people.

I didn't learn to speak Polish — I took a few Polish lessons to learn a little bit like, “That's too expensive,” or, “It's too far,” — things like that. One way [we learned is when] we would go out with some of the Polish people from the Embassy and try to buy things from the grocery stores, or things like that. You could see that there was beginning to be less and less food, and less and less material things in the country. And also, for example, if you had a hundred-zloty bill or even hard currency such as a twenty-zloty piece of money, and you wanted to buy something that was three or four zlotys, you didn't get your change back, because they wanted the hard currency, see? They didn't accept paper money at that time. So it was quite interesting. By the time we left, or [even] before we left, it was really getting pretty difficult.

One time, I made a trip to Danzig for the Ambassador with some instructions that he gave me orally. You weren't supposed to [talk with anyone] — you didn't know whether you would be caught with anything -so it was just oral instructions to the man in charge there, the Consul.

Q: Was that Mr. Kuykendall?

McQUATTERS: Yes. [pause, then laughs] It was really very interesting, because the day that I arrived at Danzig for our conference, he met me at the station and said, “You're coming to stay at my house, with my wife. There's a young fellow who's there, too. The crazy young fellow, he was taking photographs all over the place.” — [laughs] — as the Nazis were, of course, running all around — “I had to go down and get him out. He didn't

mean any harm, but he was just stupid, this boy, taking photographs. He should have known better." So this boy was there, also, in the Consulate.

Q: He was a German as a guest of the American Consulate, the photographer?

McQUATTERS: No, he was just a little American boy. He just didn't know better. But still, the Consul wasn't so sure about this fellow. So I had to go back the next day. He said, "He's going away too; I'm sending him away. He can go and get on the train all by himself, but I'll take you to the train and see that you get into your compartment," which I thought was fine. It was an overnight trip, and I wasn't supposed to have anything to do with this fellow. "Don't talk to him, because you never know anything," and all of the sort, because people were very suspicious in those days. So, everything was fine, and we went to sleep. Right next [to my compartment] there was a little washroom. The next day, coming into Warsaw, I was [standing] in the corridor, and he came out of his door which was right next to my compartment! We had been using the same washroom, and I didn't know! [laughs] We'd never coincided with each other, you know, and the doors had been wide open! I thought we would die laughing. There were a lot of instances like that. I don't know what happened to him afterwards. The Consul was being so careful to keep us apart, and here we had the same little washroom — that was very funny.

I was also sent to Berlin with a message to deliver there.

Q: To the Ambassador?

McQUATTERS: From the Ambassador to the Ambassador. It was quite interesting because one of the young Third Secretaries, which I had known — he was in Warsaw when I got there, and he'd been transferred to Berlin — was there. It was a very easy trip to take. But it was a time when you just didn't have too much confidence in anybody. You just kept everything to yourself as much as you could. You had a lot of people - [pause]

There was a telephone operator at the Embassy, a young man named Grotowski, the son of a former Consul General in Chicago, the Polish Consul General to Chicago. He was well educated and a very nice person, but he would listen to conversations, you see. [laughs] Finally, sometimes the Ambassador would say, “Ail right, now, Grotowski, you just hang up the phone,” so of course he had [been listening in]. Several times, I had come into in my office, and I always found him sort of looking around in the wastepaper [basket and] in the incoming basket, and things like that. I kept wondering, “What on earth is he doing here?”

Well, then [after that], you didn't leave anything out. You locked everything up. Just to show you how close it was — we had a Disbursing Officer who was a very nice American, and — Grotowski didn't come to work one day, and didn't come to work the second day, and nobody — he didn't call in to say he was not well. So the Ambassador sent this Disbursing Officer out to his [Grotowski's] house to see — 'cause you couldn't get in touch with him in any other way — and there he was, just sort of sitting there on his porch, and he [the Disbursing Officer] said, “Are you coming back to work or not, because you can't keep this up.” And he [Grotowski] said, “Oh, yes, yes, I'll be back in a few days,” and [that] he just was having some little difficulty. Well, he didn't come back. And finally, the same Disbursing Officer went out and got the news: he [Grotowski] had been in our employ, paid by the State Department, and he was also working for the Germans and working for the Poles. And he was getting all this information. After a while, though, he couldn't get any [more] information, because we had been locking everything, and had everything tied down — this business of finding him a couple of times in the office, looking around the paper[s], listening on the telephone — he [now] had no information to pass on. And then, I don't know who it was — I never found out whether it was the Germans or the Poles — when he got on a train to come into Warsaw, they threw him off the train and he was killed. That's how they found him — on the tracks.

That's just one incident of the sort of tension that you were living under in those days. The Ambassador was certainly very calm — he was a very strong person, in a very mild way, but he was very strong — and he tried to take care of the staff as much as he could. In the garden of the Embassy, they had dug a trench so that if anything happened, you could go out and get in the trench. We had messages from the State Department that we were trying to decode, that said, “You are ordered to take the women members of your staff and put them in a safe position,” meaning that they should go in the trench. But in decoding that message — I remember very well — the flak was coming down so strong that you couldn't even leave the building to go out into the trench! There were two or three of us that were decoding the messages, and we just stayed where we were. Nothing happened to any of us. Although the flak was very strong, it didn't seem to get into the trench nor into the house. But later on, the Ambassador felt that, for our protection, we should go to a place outside of Warsaw. I don't know whether that was in the documents or not ...

Q: He [Ambassador Biddle] mentions that there was an Embassy villa at — Konstancin? — is that the town?

McQUATTERS: Yes, that's right! So we went there, and most of the women members of the staff had a house, near the Ambassador's house. That's when in his yard, thirteen bombs were dropped. And every one of them was a dud! We heard all that noise and everything, and we rushed to find out what it was. He said, “This is too risky — we're going to leave Konstancin and go back into Warsaw.” So we all went back! [laughs] Some people said that those bombs were duds on purpose, just to frighten the foreigners who were there, or just to let them know that [the Nazis] had the power over the air, which they did. The Poles had nothing, and the other countries like France and England didn't come in very strong for three or four days. And this happened on the first day of the War. I think on the fifth day, we left on the convoy, and went south.

Q: If we could go back just a little bit, before the invasion had started. You said there was a feeling that [Polish] Foreign Minister Beck had changed positions?

McQUATTERS: No, no. Foreign Minister Beck was just fine at that time, as far as I was aware, and the Ambassador too. It was only afterwards that we learned that he had not been as correct as he had [reputedly] been — he was more for the Nazis, for the Germans, than he was for the Poles. At least that's what I understood.

Q: After the invasion started?

McQUATTERS: No, after the war was over, we learned that. We found out that the Military Attach# to the German Embassy had been friendly with some of the younger officers and with the Military Attach# in Warsaw. He was reported to have said, “Where is Mr. Biddle?” when the War started, on the first day. He came up and said, “How about you, Mr. Elbrick [C. Burke Elbrick, then Third Secretary of the U.S. Embassy to Poland] — and where is Mr. Biddle now, today?” [in a mocking or sarcastic tone] — so it showed that he was really for the Germans. He had been friendly with all of the officers and the Military Attach# all that time, and they never did suspect that he had — that he would be — you, know, a Nazi.

Q: This was — he [Ambassador Biddle] mentions a Major Colburn [who] was the U.S. Military Attach# —

McQUATTERS: He was our Military Attach# — Major Colburn.

Q: So this other person was — a German.

McQUATTERS: A German.

Q: And he was Military Attach# to Warsaw.

McQUATTERS: Well, he was — the other man was — a German Military Attach# attached to the German Embassy in Warsaw, you see. Major Colburn was our Military Attach#. It's wonderful — what you've got there — [laughs] you must have read those [referring to the 1976 Biddle Report book] — those things from A to Z!

Q: Well, it helps to have it down, to remember what is what.

McQUATTERS: [laughs] I remember that he had invited two or three of the Clerks -'cause they don't have that title anymore; you're not a Clerk of Embassy anymore. You're, I suppose, an Administrative Assistant, or something like that, anything that's big and high-sounding! — he [the German Military Attach#] invited us to his house for dinner. And, he said, “Well, things are not what I'd like to see, but I don't think there's any reason to worry.” And we went home about ten o'clock, back to our place, and the very next day the bombs started!

They were so devious, those Germans. I had gotten an apartment, and a German maid. She came recommended, and said, “Here is my credential.” She had been working for one of the German Military Attach#s in Warsaw! [laughs] She said, “Just call him up, and you'll find...” And so I called him up, and he said, “Well, you see, she's excellent, but we're changing our household, and we don't need her anymore.” [laughs] I hired her, and she was really a marvelous maid. I had my apartment about ten minutes away [from the Embassy], and two friends of mine from the clerical staff used to come to lunch every day, and afterwards we'd all go back to work again. One day, we were having lunch, and I remember apologizing when the maid passed the — biscuits or something — around, and the napkin in the tray was not very clean. I said, “I'm so sorry about the soiled napkin, it's terrible.” The very next day, the napkin was as clean as anything, and that made me realize that though she had said she didn't understand English very well — and I had taken a few lessons in German, and I would say just a few little words to communicate with her — she understood English perfectly and she was just hoping against hope. That's why they placed her there, because they thought I was a very important person. But I never

took anything home, as it wasn't safe, and I never discussed anything over the telephone that wasn't easily understood. I mean, nothing secretive. I did have the information, of course, because I was very close to the Ambassador. They probably thought this was really fine, we'll just get into her place. But it was a great disappointment to them.

Then, when the war actually started, I dismissed her. I'd seen her walking down the street with this German Attach# — they were great pals — and the next day, I dismissed her. She refused to go — it was a terrible thing — and I reported it to the Polish authorities. But they had no power; even at that early stage, they couldn't do anything, they were so powerless. I think the whole government was probably infiltrated with traitors.

Before I got my own apartment, I had lived in a pension [pronounced the French way, as in a rented room], and it was a very nice pension. I had a little sort of alcove bedroom, and I had a living room, and bath — it was very nice. The only thing, it was sort of difficult for lunch, because we had American hours, and they — the Poles — had Polish hours, and it was very hard. But the dinner was always served up in your salon with a waiter with white gloves — very elegant. And I'll never forget that woman's name, because her name was Jabelewski [phonetically: zhah-bel-LEF-ski]. She was so disagreeable, especially to Americans. She just didn't like Americans at all. Later, I learned, from Polish friends that came later, that she was definitely pro-German. A Pole that was pro-German. [laughs] She probably had been born in Danzig or something like that.

But there was that little feeling of, “Just be quiet, and don't talk about anything that's interesting. Just talk about things that have no consequence at all.”

Q: So most of the Poles were — untrustworthy? You couldn't tell whether they were pro-German or not?

McQUATTERS: I must say, that most of the Poles were not pro-German. But not all of them — you couldn't tell. Like this Jabelewski, she ran a wonderful pension and was very elegant, but she was pro-German. I know I had some Polish friends, and they couldn't

have been nicer. But there were one or two — like this boy, Grotowski [the Embassy telephone operator] -he was well educated, he'd been to Oxford ... a very nice person who had wonderful manners ... he just had to have a lot of money — but there he was, he got involved with the Americans and the Poles and the Germans all at once, and then, of course, he got into a terrible lot of trouble. There were a few like that who were disagreeable.

We had one Polish man, he was a Polish Jewish man whose job was in the financial [section], handing out the checks to the other people, and —

Q: People in the Embassy?

McQUATTERS: He was at the Embassy. He was a Polish Jew. Couldn't have been nicer. He evacuated with us. He left his wife and family there, and evacuated with us.

The first place we went to was Krzemieniec [phonetically: kshim-YEN-yez] — it's probably in your papers there somewhere. Well, the [very] first place was only a watering place. It was big enough for all the Poles [the fleeing Polish Government] and the accompanying governments. We were only there just one night. [ed note: McQuatters here confuses Krzemieniec with Naleczow, the spa town 23 kilometers west of Lublin and over 200 km. southeast of Warsaw; she corrects herself by the end of the paragraph, referring to Krzemieniec as the next destination after “the spa place.” The U.S. embassy staff stayed in Naleczow on the night of Sept. 5, 1939, then proceeded another 480 km. to the east to Krzemieniec (only 30 km. west of the Soviet border), which the staff reached on the morning of Sept. 7 after having driven through the night.]It was a spa place, and we were all billeted in various places, but there was one central place where we would go in to eat. We had gone in and were eating, and we got word from the Ambassador — who sent his chauffeur over to us — that, “When you get through with dinner, go home and wait for a message.” There was no electricity, just candles; it was very gloomy and kind of scary. We went back to the place where we were supposed to go, and we got the message from the

Ambassador to pack and leave immediately. There were four girls from the Embassy, and I had my own car. The chauffeur gave us a map, and said, “You go here, here, here,” like that [indicating in a zigzag pattern] “and that's where you're going.” And that was [the route to] Krzemieniec on the Romanian frontier.

We sat down and examined this map, and I said to the chauffeur, “Can you help us put the things [in the car]?” He said, “No, I'm leaving right away with the Ambassador.” So we packed everything by ourselves. We had bidons of gasoline — 5-gallon cans of gasoline — and one little suitcase for each one of us. We had to leave everything else in Warsaw, and that was all we could carry, because it was a station wagon — actually, it was not my car, it was a station wagon from the Embassy — we'd taken out one of the seats, so there were five of us there. We had one extra tire and these bidons of gasoline, and the Ambassador said — [end of side one of tape one]

We had a conference there, and some of the girls said — I can't believe it, but I was the only one there who knew how to drive a car. It was incredible, that in that late stage in life, nobody could drive, except me — they said, “Why must we go over here and then back like this? We can just go straight and it'll be much better.” Being the way I was — or am — I said, “No, the Ambassador said to follow this way, and that's what we're going to do.”

It was much longer [a route], of course, and that's when we had the 400-kilometer drive in the middle of the night. We weren't allowed to have lights on the car. Every time I would turn the light on — quickly, just to see where I was, and we were all over the place — all these drunken soldiers that were retreating would yell and scream. They were upset, of course — but we just never knew. You couldn't see — I had to stick my head out of the window in order to see where I was — and we went like snails, because I was afraid. There were a lot of these holes and tanks, and soldiers walking around. If you to dared hit one of them, I don't know what would have happened! [laughs]

Just before we left, this Polish-Jewish man who was with us in that spa place, came and asked if he could go with us in the car. And I said, “Well, of course, we'll take you, but we haven't any place.” He said, “Doesn't matter,” and climbed up on top of the luggage in the back. The poor man had to be [riding] like this [hunching over]. But it was wonderful to have him, because he could speak German. Naturally, you didn't want to leave a man like that — it would be sudden death. Aneksztejn [phonetically: ANN-ek-stine] was his name. [ed note: Aneksztejn was the assistant to the disbursing officer.]

Then at the first top, we learned why the Ambassador said, “Go this way.” He had prepared — it shows another example of how thoughtful he was, for his staff— he prepared it, so that when we got to this place which was a gasoline station, they had been warned, “Car with such-and-such license plate is coming, and furnish them with gasoline.” That's why we went this zigzag way — one reason why — and another reason was to avoid any bombs and anything like that. The main road would be covered [under fire] by the airplanes.

It was an all-night ride, and to keep me awake, they had been pounding me on the back and feeding me pieces of chocolate and things like that [laughs] to keep me awake. Finally, when we got to Krzemieniec — we were directed to go to this sort of house, on the side of the road. They [the Biddles] had arrived about two hours ahead of us, you see, 'cause they got a two-hour start. Mrs. Biddle had gone to either the church or the school, or someplace — to the authorities — and had gotten a lot of towsacks, and had gone to someplace else and had gotten a lot of clean straw, and had this straw stuffed in the towsacks. That was where we were to sleep! We had just these towsacks full of straw to sleep on. It was in a square room, something like this [12x20'], maybe not quite so large, and there we were, the five of us, just around like that [with a sweep of her hand] on the floor. We didn't care [laughs] because we were so tired! In the middle of room, there was a light that came down from the ceiling — just a bulb — and a table and some chairs around. That was the office. The newspaper men were all around, and the Ambassador was giving

instructions and dictating and so forth, and the newspaper men were talking and asking about this [and that]. When we got tired, we simply said that we were going to bed, went off in one corner and went to sleep. Nobody paid any attention to anybody.

There was really a remarkable esprit de corps — they were remarkable men, and he [Ambassador Biddle] was too, and so was his wife. Working like that under those conditions, trying to send messages to the State Department — long messages and cables that were clear, because it would be silly to try to put it in code. But, of course, nothing ever got through [laughs] because the telegraph offices were under the control of the Nazis! Mrs. Biddle had a sort of alcohol-burner thing, or something like that, for a tea set. She would make Nescafe with hot water at 2 or 3 in the morning when we were working away.

To go back a little bit in Warsaw, when things were building up, and the Ambassador would go to the Foreign Office for a meeting, he would not get back until like around 12 or 1 o'clock. I would have to go down to his residence and he would dictate what had happened and what was said. Then we would go back to the Embassy and get the people out of bed. They would put it in code, and about 4 o'clock in the morning you could go home. One of the men would take it over to the telegraph office to be sent back [to Washington]. When he did that, he [Ambassador Biddle] wanted to be nice to the people who were having to work so late, under those conditions, so he sent champagne and sandwiches, and things like that, to keep us awake. Finally, I said, “Don't sent any more champagne, send Coca-Cola,” because the champagne was too much! [both laugh] He was a very thoughtful person, in spite of the work he had to do. And so was she. It was a wonderful team — the two of them were wonderful. They had privileges, but they didn't take advantage of those privileges against us — by contrast to the girls [in the clerical staff].

So there we were in Krzemieniec, and right across the street — there was a big road, and then the house over here [gesturing to one side] and right across the road — there was

a big market. There were Poles and everybody there, going to the market to see if they could get in the way of a little bit of food. We had been ordered — the women members had been ordered — out of Krzemieniec, to go to Bucharest. We were loading the car — did you see any pictures of that in the [book]?

Q: No, they just have the one picture from Warsaw.

McQUATTERS: I have a lot of pictures — but I didn't really have time because of that house guest who was there in my apartment [last night]. I didn't have time to go digging around in my apartment while she was there — of the destruction of Krzemieniec. The Germans came in and they just simply destroyed it, it was terrible. What they did was they attacked that marketplace. They killed a lot of people. That was when Mr. — that was when we had just left, and we learned later that — Mr. Biddle had wanted to protect his wife and daughter. He thought it would be fine to go there [into the marketplace, during the bombing]. But she said, “No, no, no.” She pulled him back and she made him go behind the building where we [had been staying]. She really saved his life that way because if he'd been in the marketplace, he could have been hit as well as the others.

Also to go back a little bit, we were on our way from Warsaw to that first watering place [Naleczow] that we had got in the convoy, but the convoy got split up. We knew where we were going, so it didn't matter whether we got split up or not. We had a big American flag on top of the car. And that's when the Germans — they flew so low, you could just see there faces in the cockpit, it was terrible — they could come down and strafe the convoys of the cars, especially the ones with an American flag on it! [laughs] It was terrible, so we took the American flag off. But many times we had to jump out of the car and get into the ditches on each side of the road to try to avoid the shrapnel and bombs and what they were shooting. It was just like a game with them — they were just having a great time, because they had no opposition! When we were originally going to go into Russia, but we didn't go in there, because of all of a sudden, the Russians came marching into Poland, into this spa place. And they [the Poles] said, “Oh, isn't this wonderful, you came to help

us.” And they [the Russians] got in about 50 miles into Poland, and then they turned around and said, “You're crazy, we're not coming in to help you, but to take over.” So that was really bad. Therefore, we had to leave, and not go into the Soviet Union, but go in to Bucharest, and eventually into France.

Q: When you originally left Krzemieniec, you had been going to go into the Soviet Union?

McQUATTERS: No, no. From the spa place [Naleczow], we were going to go into Russia. Then when we couldn't go into Russia [following the Soviet invasion of eastern Poland], we went down that way to Krzemieniec, which was toward Bucharest, toward Romania. We went, and then the girls had to go. [ed note: embassy staffers/clerks Miss Saunders, Miss Hillery and Miss Pinard, as well as Mr. Aneksztejn] I was still driving the car, because still nobody [else] could drive. We were met on the bridge. We had a Polish man with us, because he had to bring the car back. The car was not allowed to go across — to go out of the country. So he — that's right, he drove the car, too, and he was a very bad driver, and he went 90 miles an hour, and there were rocks and things. One of the rocks flew up and hit the gasoline tank in the back, and made a hole in it, and all the gas leaked out. So we had a terrible time! [laughs] You know, you couldn't just put a piece of plastic over it, or something, so we stuffed rags in that hole to keep it closed enough for us to get to our destination. There, we were met by the American authorities from Bucharest, and taken into Bucharest. Eventually, the Ambassador and Mrs. Biddle and [their] family came there also.

From there, several of the girls were sent other places, or they were told to stay where they were. There was just one other girl and I, who were to follow with the Ambassador. But there was no way of getting out of Bucharest. The Ambassador finally managed with the Minister of Transport in Romania to put a car on the end of a train — they would put an engine of some sort and a car — and they would get us out. Only this one car, they would seal it. That's when we went out of Romania. To avoid Germany, we went down to Italy — and up. But we couldn't get out [of the train], you see. But we did have with us the French

Ambassador to Poland. He was in our car with us and we brought him back, which was good.

I remember, that Ambassador and Mrs. Biddle went on [ahead] to get onto the train, and they left me and this other girl to bring all the luggage. And there were tons of it. I thought we were never going to make it. If we had missed the train, it would have been just terrible. The train was starting off, and we were just throwing the suitcases in the cars as it came along. We, ourselves, finally jumped on the last car. It took us at least four hours to catch our breath or even to talk. [laughs] Since that time, I can't stand to be late. If I'm going to Europe, I want to be there [at the airport] two hours ahead of time. Maybe that's a result of that, I don't know.

Q: You learned your lesson there!

McQUATTERS: I certainly did! And then we eventually got to Paris.

Q: Did the train go through Hungary?

McQUATTERS: No, from Romania, the train went down through Italy, and then up, as far as I know.

Q: Down through Yugoslavia and Hungary, or down through Bulgaria?

McQUATTERS: Don't ask me, I just don't really know [laughs]. I just don't remember.

Q: That's all right. Across Northern Italy?

McQUATTERS: Across Northern Italy, that's right. [U.S. Ambassador] Bullitt was still in Paris, and he met us there — and Mrs. DeSchaub was in Paris at the time — she was waiting for us to come. Mrs. Biddle, and her daughter, and one of her personal secretaries, all got there, and also the man that the daughter was going to marry.

Q: Ambassador Biddle's daughter was going to marry?

McQUATTERS: That Mrs. Biddle's daughter, she was going to marry this young fellow. Maybe you read about it, Prince Hohenlohe [Prince Alexander Hohen-Lohe-Waldenburg-Schillingsf#rst]. She married a Polish prince. She had met this prince, she knew him. He was in the Polish Army - oh, this is all mixed up; he was really German, but he was adopted by his father's brother. His father's brother had no children, but the father had lots of children, and he had said, “Let me adopt Alec, and then he can have all my Polish possessions! So he was adopted that way. I don't think the father gave him up or anything like that, but he adopted him. And so, of course, he was a Pole. He was a Polish — well, he ran away, and he got out with us. And he came out too, and there, in Paris, they were married, Prince Hohenlohe and — [Mrs. Biddle's daughter]. They eventually had two children. She — they later divorced, which was sad. Schaubie [Ella DeSchaub] can tell you of all that, because she was in on all that. Alec — Alexander Hohenlohe was his name — was a very personable young man, very handsome. He really had some good qualities. But he married this heiress, you see — and so that was just fine! [laughs] Anyway, they had two children, and — Alec is no longer living, and neither is Peggy, his wife, but the children are — they're still around, a girl and a boy, and one lives in Washington, the other lives in Florida. They're both married, and Mrs. Biddle's daughter — this has nothing to do with your thesis, but just as a matter of interest — when she divorced Alec, she later married Morton Downey. I don't know whether you knew [of] Morton Downey, but this was the father of the Morton Downey that was on television — did you ever see him on television? Morton Downey was the son of the man that she married. Morton Downey [Sr.] is now dead, too — he died about a year ago. Peggy died first, and then he died.

Q: Had Alec been under any pressure in Warsaw to be more German, since he was of German heritage?

McQUATTERS: No — I think he really was more German than he was Polish, because his uncle had adopted him, so he could leave his Polish possessions to him — but he

wasn't under any particular pressure. He was just a young feller — what, he was just 18 or 20, something like that — but I think his sympathies probably were with the Germans. Certainly not with the Poles. He just was one of those very good-looking, handsome prince[s] — he wasn't a frog — [laughs] you didn't have to kiss him to turn him into a prince!

But anyway, what else could I say about the exodus?

Q: You said you'd had to go down to Angers [in the south of France], after Paris?

McQUATTERS: Yes, we got to Paris and we stayed there a little while, and Schaubie [Ella DeSchaub], whom you've met, went to Angers to find quarters for everybody. But they were so late in sending her that — you know, Angers was a town of about 30,000 people [In March 2002, McQuatters claimed the increase was from 20,000 to 40,000], and overnight, it grew to about 40,000 because all of the governments that were accredited to the Polish Government went down, and they had all their staffs and everything — she found a very nice place, a little square house, that was the Embassy. The ground floor was the Embassy, and the upstairs floor was where she and I — and this other girl, she was the personal secretary — lived. We had three bedrooms and a sitting room upstairs, that was quite nice. We had a cook, so everything was taken care of. The Ambassador — and Mrs. Biddle, she — found a castle with a moat around it for them! [both laugh] That moat was really quite something. We were invited out there — it was about ten miles outside of Angers — that was very nice. But it was cold, and they had not much heat, and they had a lot of little electric stoves, but still, you had to walk around with a blanket over you. And they would come in quite often to the Embassy and stay as long as they could, then would go back out. They had a lot of entertaining and so forth. And then they said to Schaubie [that] they didn't want it. First, they had told Schaubie and this other girl, to go to a hotel, and then they came and took our rooms, and left me in that other room all by myself. I didn't think that was very much fun, because they would go out to dinner and come in late. There was just one bathroom, and so you would have to get up about four in the morning

to get a place in the bathroom [laughs] in peace. So I finally left and went to the hotel, too, and they had the whole top floor to themselves. But Mrs. Biddle said, “Now, Schaubie, you find us another place.” And she went around and found a very nice place, not far from where we were, which worked out fine.

It wasn't really funny, but in those instances it was funny — we decided that it would be nice to have a little place to go on the weekend, you know, 5 or 6 miles outside — that's when I had my car; I'd got it in Paris, then, after the exodus — and we found a little farmhouse. We all went there, and Schaubie's aunt came there from Paris, and she stayed with us for a while. But then the Biddles decided that they wanted a little place out in the country, too. They had been in this place with the moat around it, but that was too far — they didn't like that, though they liked the place in town — so she found this other place [in the country]. And the other place was a priory — you know what that is, a place with the monks in it, and with kind of a church, and the other part of the house — and we discovered that our farmhouse — which was about a mile from the priory — used to be a nunnery, [laughs] and there was a tunnel between them! [both laugh]

Q: Oh, no! [laughing]

McQUATTERS: [still laughing] It's the truth! And don't you dare put that in any book! Anyway, something had happened, and there had been a collapse — probably in a heavy rainfall or something — and the tunnel was closed up because the dirt had filled it up. But anyway, there were no more monks in this monkery place. But it was all very funny.

Now Mrs. Biddle, she always wanted to keep in contact right away. She said we should have a telephone put in, so we could call from the monkery over to the nunnery, and we could keep in constant touch. We said, “We don't think we can do that, Mrs. Biddle, because it's a monument historique. It's an historic monument,” and she said, “That's all right.” [But this meant that] every day, at the crack of dawn, the chauffeur would come over and bring us to their place — it would have been better if we'd had the

telephone! [laughing] But the relationship was very, very cordial. With all the work and the responsibility that he had, it was not easy for him. A lot of these people had been in the diplomatic business forever and ever and ever, and he was just brought into it. He was wonderful.

After the Fall of France [June 1940], we went to eventually Bordeaux [from Angers], and we were bombed there as well. We'd been staying at the Chateau Haut Brion, and they had all these vineyards that came right up [to the mansion] — it was just lovely. The people who owned Haut Brion at that time — a man and, I think, an American girl, who was ill — had moved into the little part and gave us all the rest of the place — our Embassy and also the Consulate — so that we had taken most of it. There were still five of us [staff women] — Schaubie and this other girl and me, and her [DeSchaub's] aunt and a sister-in-law, which was all very, very nice. Every day we would go to Bordeaux — helping people get out of France, all that sort of thing, and there was a lot of work there — and then we would go back to the Chateau.

One particular night, we were back, and the Ambassador had been retained because of something. And there was a terrible raid, because the Germans had decided they were fed up with Vichy and all this business, and they wanted an answer right away, so they really bombed it very very strong, even as far out as the Chateau [Haut Brion]. We left the chateau and ran out into the vines, rows and rows and rows. If the pilots saw any moving objects they would shoot at you. There was nothing to keep them from it — we could only lie down on the ground and wait until the bombs or the planes went over — and then would get up and move to another place. We did have a trench there, and we tried to make [it to] the trench. Sometimes we did — but it was muddy and cold, and we preferred to lie on top of the [ground] with the vines. It was very scary, and Mrs. Biddle was very worried about the Ambassador. Finally, he came back. That was really the end; we really had to leave. We went into Spain, and to Portugal, and came back to the United States.

Then he campaigned for President Roosevelt, and went to the various localities that were largely Polish. I went with him — one-night stands, on the train — that was a very interesting part. Afterwards, he was appointed to London as Ambassador to all the exiled governments that were established. That was really something.

Q: You stayed with him?

McQUATTERS: Yes. We had seven official exiled governments and three unofficial ones, so we had [altogether] ten governments. It was unbelievable, the amount of work. But little by little, we managed it. We had to have American citizens working in the Embassy, and we couldn't get enough. We did finally get one girl whose mother was an American — or her father, one or the other, was an American, I forget! [laughs] So that was rather difficult — then we finally managed to get this American girl who was the personal private secretary [end of tape one; begin tape two]

I have a very beautiful souvenir he gave me, Mr. Biddle, commemorating the 'exodus' as it were. It's a cigarette case — I don't smoke, but I did then, a little bit, but [now] I don't smoke — about this big, in gold [making a square of about two by four inches, with her hands], and in the top of the cigarette case — it was from Cartier — he had written in his own hand what he'd thought of me, and signed it, “Tony Biddle,” or something like that. In the bottom of it was a map of Poland and a little station wagon going down with all the names of the places we went. It's very lovely, and I like it very much.

Q: It's probably much the same as the map, here, in his book.

McQUATTERS: Let's see. [She takes a look at the map on p. 114 of the 1976 Biddle Report book.]

Q: [Pointing out the route of the 'exodus'] It shows some of the different towns —

McQUATTERS: [still examining with her glasses] Well, that's right — that's right. That little map going all the way down [pointing to the Romanian border]. Now, that's absolutely true. We were in Romania here [indicating with her finger], and we went to Northern Italy. As far as I know, we did not go across Hungary when we went on that train. [pause while McQuatters flips through pages of book] Is this the book — the famous book? [RB had told her of the book's comprehensive collection of cables and letters of Biddle, before the interview, and McQuatters had sounded very interested in it.]

Q: Yes — there's a photo, earlier on — perhaps you can identify some of the people the pictures [taking the book from McQuatters and turning to the photograph on page 99, entitled "September 1st. Watching the first large-scale air raid over Warsaw from the courtyard of the Chancery."].

McQUATTERS: I would like very much to show you some of those pictures — perhaps I could send them to you, maybe. [As she sees the photo:] Oh, yes, of course — I know this picture very well! They were in the trench, in the back [of the Chancery], in the garden. [Pointing to the various persons, with RB repeating aloud their positions, here mentioned in brackets] This is the Ambassador [center front] and this is the young Polish American [left front, with glasses] who was over there studying, Charlie was his name, but I don't what his last name [was. She eventually recalled that this was Charles Moszczynski, or Charles Morley later in life — see appendix.]. And this is the Third Secretary, named Burke Elbrick — this one right here, looking up [right front, with wristwatch, watching for planes like the rest], and this is Mrs. Biddle's daughter [Peggy, the woman in the background, closest to the center of the photo] next to this boy [to the left and back of 'Charlie'] and I don't know who the others are [the two other women in the left background. McQuatters reexamined the photo in March, 2002, and declared that the woman behind Moszczynski was a secretary of Ambassador Biddle's, Mrs. Mary Willis McKensey. She also confirmed her 1991 naming of the others in the photo.]. Well, that's the day that we couldn't get into the place [the trench] because it [the bombing] was so thick. We — who were decoding the

messages telling us to get to a safe place — couldn't get in there because it was coming down so thick.

Is there another picture, by any chance, or is that the only one?

Q: That's the only picture in the book.

McQUATTERS: Oh, I have lots of pictures — I have the picture of his [the Ambassador's] house which was bombed — [cut off by the entry of Mrs. DeSchaub, hereafter noted as DS, who had apparently decided that she was well enough to be interviewed at this taping. McQuatters addressed her:]

There you are! Come on in! [motioning to DeSchaub to come join her on the couch, then turning back to Baxter] Well, do you think this has been long enough? It probably has been. [sounding tired]

Q: Sure. [Somewhat disappointed at not being able to continue] That'd be great. It'd give you a good time to catch up on everything — [handing her the book] with this.

McQUATTERS: Do you want to talk to Schaubie now?

Q: Sure. That'd be wonderful [helping McQuatters from the couch]

McQUATTERS: Schaubie, I did touch on you a little bit — how you found the houses [in Angers]. [McQuatters assists DeSchaub in sitting down, and brings her and Baxter some tea, the conversation surrounding which has not been noted] He just showed us the picture in the book with Burke Elbrick and Peggy and Mr. “B”.

DeSCHAUB: That was interesting! [speaking in her softer, more precisely pronounced, and strongly accented English]

McQUATTERS: If I hadn't had that houseguest, I could have gotten in and gotten those pictures. But I'll try to get them to you. Maybe you could come again, sometime, and I could —

Q: Yes, I'd like that very much.

McQUATTERS: [Showing DeSchaub the picture] See there, remember when they were in the trench in the garden — there's Burke — and then this is Charlie —

DeSCHAUB: Yes, I know.

McQUATTERS: What was his last name?

Q: He actually wrote an introduction to that book — just the introduction was by him — he was working on his doctoral thesis.

McQUATTERS: You mean the introduction is by him?

Q: He wrote it.

McQUATTERS: Oh, boy! [both women laugh with surprise]

Q: You'll enjoy it very much.

McQUATTERS: That's really something. I'll have to read that. Listen, I'll go in the other room. Schaubie —

DeSCHAUB: It's a [unintelligible] picture —

McQUATTERS: Yes, I have that one. Moszczynski, is that his name, Charlie Moszczynski? [after an affirmative nod from Baxter] Look, I think I'll take it [book] and look

at it in the other room, if you don't mind. You don't need it [for the DeSchaub interview], do you?

Q: No, you go right ahead.

[After more talk of more tea, the DeSchaub interview officially begins:]

DeSCHAUB: Well, I'm sure you enjoyed talking to her, because she is very good about knowing things and remembering. I just get it in flashes — there's so much I've forgot. I think we have lived through a very impressive time. And Warsaw was such an experience in every way.

Q: It must have been so tense there.

DeSCHAUB: Well, of course it was tense — and sad in a way. You felt two hundred ... [pause] four hundred years back sometimes [with] the whole way of the people, the way they took things. They were very good about accepting life the way it was, because it was very hard. They didn't know any better, and times were bad.

For instance, we — the Biddles — and of course I went with them, I was always everywhere having to arrange things and buy things — when he was nominated to Warsaw, we went first to a country place, because the Palace wasn't ready. We stayed in a [unintelligible] villa. Anyway, it wasn't yet cold — it must have been autumn — but it got colder. We were there in this country place which was absolutely adorable. It was pure Empire, and all the inside was - [pause]

Countess Potocka [phonetically: po-TOFF-ska], who had it, had kept it up beautifully. But the whole thing was all on one floor, [the] ground floor — there were just two little [rooms] upstairs. One was the Countess' bedroom, and the other, I don't know what — I never went that far. [laughs] When I was there, this — Natoline [phonetically nah-toe-LEEN] was [its] name — I had to stay after when they had left to go to the Palace which [by then] was

ready. I stayed there alone, and I had to tell the servants — there were masses of servants — what to do and how to do [it]. Mrs. Biddle told me to bring her silver and her nice things to the Palace. Anyway, there were quite a lot of things which she had bought, and which had to be packed and sent to Warsaw.

Q: So this first house you'd moved into was right when the Ambassador came to Warsaw?

DeSCHAUB: Yes, I had — I came with her, so I had to go to the country [house] first — then I took my car to get to the Palace. It was a beautiful palace, with a big, big library.

Q: That's just where the Biddles stayed —

DeSCHAUB: Yes, yes.

Q: And you stayed nearby?

DeSCHAUB: I first had a little flat with a secretary of Mr. Biddle, and had to go back and forth. Then [pause] I was mostly with that nurse in the Palace or at the house, I have forgotten.

The Poles had this habit of living very, very well — for a short while, giving parties and receiving caviar — [like] it was just a little thing!

Beautiful parties! Then, [having] spent all the money they had, they went to the country and there lived very frugally. That is certainly true. I [didn't go] many places out of the town — or palaces or whatever you call them — but I saw quite a few. Mr. Biddle rented one from Count Potocki [now: po-TOT-ski], who was then Polish Ambassador to America. [McQuatters noted in March 2002 that Charles Morley had incorrectly ascertained the Biddles' arrangement with the Potockis; on pg. xi of the 1976 book, Morley wrote that Ambassador Biddle “... spent many weekends on the Potocki estate...” McQuatters clarified that the Biddles actually rented the palace from the Potockis so that they [the

Biddles] could entertain greater numbers of people in a more lavish setting than they could at their Warsaw residence.] So we went there, and I was with them always.

Q: What was your official title with the Embassy?

DeSCHAUB: I never had any title, and when asked, “What do you do there?” I said, “Everything.” I had to watch the dogs; I had to take them to the vet. I had to watch the children, [and] take them also wherever they had to go. And the household, and see that I had — [pause] Fortunately, the Biddles had a Polish secretary, [since] I didn't have one — because all of us couldn't speak Polish. Some spoke German. That was the one language where you could sometimes be understood. In shops, for instance. They would have shops with German employees — a few, one, maybe — and so we could talk and be understood, but it was difficult. They [the Poles] were always very nice to us. Very grateful for everything we did — very, very pleasant people. The wealthy ones with palaces accepted us also — Miss McQuatters and myself, and the other secretaries — we were treated just like friends, I must say.

In that Natoline Palace outside town — I must tell you because it was typical of the kind of life we had — we had a Polish guard. He was a very rough individual, and not at all nice. He was not nice to the other servants — he treated them like nothing. I had the bedroom of the Countess on the first [European style; U.S. = second] floor — she had a lovely big bedroom — and there was no other room there. My lunch I had somewhere downstairs, but dinner they would bring up to me at home.

One day, I saw the saw the head of all the troupe of the servants (I've forgotten, I don't know what you'd call it) and he was a very nice man and spoke German, so I could talk to him. I saw that there was a kind of a mattress at the foot of the staircase that went from the bedroom to the downstairs, and I asked, “What is that?” He said, “That is my night place. That is where I sleep, because I want to protect you from the guard.” It was typical of the

country, you know. I was so surprised, in fact. The guard never came — but it wasn't a question with the servants.

Mrs. Biddle had those horrible Great Dane dogs, which we didn't like. Nobody liked them, except she must have wanted them. [In March 2002, McQuatters recalled that the Great Danes were dutifully evacuated with the staff from Poland, and from France to the U.S.; they shared the first-class deck on the ship from Lisbon with the smaller dogs of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor.] I don't think that they were even intelligent, but she had them. One of them had a kind of straw mattress — whatever it was, it was good. When Mrs. Biddle left for Warsaw, this little mattress was left. Mrs. Biddle said, “Maybe, if one of the women wants it, it's all right [if she takes it].” I said, “Oh, yes, yes.” So I told one woman, and she was very grateful because it was for her child. But when she had gone a few days, she came back and said, “I want to give you back this mattress, because they are so envious — all those other women — that they don't like it at all.”

Q: They were envious?

DeSCHAUB: Yes, yes. [pause]

The children and I stayed in the little house which contained a kitchen — a very big kitchen — and a few bedrooms. That's where we were, because we couldn't all stay in the Palace. As long as the Biddles were there, the children and I and the dogs stayed in that little house.

Q: The Biddles' children didn't stay in the same house with their parents?

DeSCHAUB: They [the Biddles] had no room, really — just that one big room. Anyway, we were separated. We had a terrible time with flies. It was full of flies. I remember in the morning, we would get up, the three of us, and just swat them all over the place! Primitive, very primitive. Also, [with] the kitchen being quite a distance from the house, [the servants] had to run always with all the hot dishes. Very unpractical, but that was part of our life.

In Warsaw, of course, it was very different. We saw the wealthy people there — it had still a few wealthy families. They had big estates, and they had all their food brought from the estates. They had a lot of shooting, and always hunting. Even bears. Mr. Biddle went to a bear hunt. And — swine, what do you call them?

Q: Pigs? Boars?

DeSCHAUB: Boars — that's right. Which are also dangerous, boars. He went to all those things.

Q: Did the Ambassador go to these because he enjoyed it or because it was expected of him?

DeSCHAUB: Oh, yes — he was invited always, and of course, he was very [well] protected, you know. Especially the Ambassador to the people, they wanted to keep [him] alive.

Q: Did he have a guard that would go with him?

DeSCHAUB: Oh, yes; he always had a guard. They had lovely horses there in that country place — beautiful little Arabian horses — and little carriages like Victorias but just two people could sit in them — a place for the coachman and whoever — and then two people. And they went like the wind! I used to go with Peggy [Mrs. Biddle's daughter], who thought it was great fun. We'd just sit in her carriage and all I could think was, “When will it be over, this ride?” [laughs] — thought I'd be thrown out!

Q: Was your loyalty ever questioned by any of the Poles, because you were Swiss?

DeSCHAUB: No, no — I must say, on the contrary, I stayed very friendly with people — the ones we saw later on found houses for me, in Angers [France, where the Embassy relocated after reaching Paris]. That was my main duty. I was sent to this place, Angers —

I'd never been there before, but I knew where it was — and Mrs. Biddle said, “You go find us a nice house.” By that time, we had been in France for quite a few weeks or months, maybe, and everybody had found a house, already. So I had to — what do you call it, when a country is allowed to take it —

Q: Lease an estate — or requisition it?

DeSCHAUB: Requisition. They had a requisition for them in a chateau which I have pictures of because I had become friendly with the proprietor and his wife, two elderly people. They were there all alone in that big chateau — a chateau-fort really — which had a moat around it, and they had those old caves [for wine storage] just like at Fontainebleau. They were very nice people, and I would see him go out to the gate, and clean, and go about their other things. The Biddles had part of the castle, [but] not entirely [all of it] — they didn't have the library, which was quite big, and the chapel, and then there were those poor proprietors had one wing. But they seemed quite resigned to it, because, you know, it was war[time]. I went to see them quite often to see if everything was in order.

But it was too primitive for Mrs. Biddle. They had very little heat -they had those big faillances — heat, what do you call it? — faillances des poiles —

Q: Grates?

DeSCHAUB: Grates. They all had the doorway heated with the grates, and you had to throw in coal — all along the couloir [hallway], and they had these long couloirs. Every morning, probably at seven or before, the man came and put in the coal in all the [grates] all along. So it wasn't warm, but it was better than outside. That still existed in all those castles. They had towers — it was a chateau-fort, really — an old, old castle. The little — restroom, or whatever you call it - was in one of those, and there, of course, there was no heat at all! That was also something the Biddles didn't quite understand. I suppose he did, but Mrs. Biddle didn't.

Q: The toilet room didn't have any heat at ail?

DeSCHAUB: Oh, no! It was that round place, you know, and it was freezing cold! That was one of the dark sides of life in a chateau. But the proprietors were very nice and accepted everything we said or did. Of course, we kind of turned the whole place upside down. Mrs. Biddle said she wouldn't stay there because it was quite a distance from the town, so Mr. Biddle had to go out very early. He couldn't come for lunch, and he'd be out quite late — and she didn't like that. So finally, they told me, “Find us a house — in town.” By now, everything was taken — it was true, there was hardly any room! They had 40,000 more inhabitants by that time during that time, with the Americans and foreign people. We had the French Ambassador to Poland was there — it was such stupid, stupid thing to have a French Ambassador in France, because he came with a whole court — he had to stay! I had to find a house, first for the Turks — why I forgot -and then [for] Mrs. Biddle with her request, “Something in town.” I said, “Mrs. Biddle, I don't know Angers, number one. [When] I came here, it was my first visit to this city. I don't know a soul.” “Oh,” she said, “you'll meet people.” [laughs] So I went first to the bishop and asked him for help, if he would know [of anyplace]. He was very pleasant, but he didn't know. Then I went to the prefecture [police station], to the Prefect [Police Chief], and he was much better. He understood. I said, “You must give me some leads, someplace I [can] go and see.” It was very difficult, but he was good. He was very good; he gave me some addresses of people who might have a house — nearby — not in the city.

I set out, until at last, there was a Madame de Pimodan [phonetically: pee-moh-DAHN], who had a little castle outside [Angers], and she had a house in town like practically all the wealthy people had. I went to her and said, “Oh, please!” But she said, “I have to have a place in town.” I said, “Oh, but you can't refuse, because Mrs. Biddle can't stay in that castle. You know which one. It's cold, and impractical.” She said [demonstrating a despairing sigh] “Will you let me have my room?” [laughs] It [turned out to be] a big house with three stories, and I said, “Of course, certainly, we'll do all we can to make you —” and

she said, “But you must come and see my little castle outside.” I said, “All right, I'll come and see the little castle. We went — we had a car, of course, so it wasn't difficult — and we arrived the day they were killing the pig! You know how they scream — but she talked to the people, and they seemed very friendly. She called them all by their first name, all of them. We looked at the place, and it was all right for Angers people. But the first thing I saw, there was a mouse in the — baignoir, what do you call it?

Q: Bathroom? [meaning “salle de baigne” or room with the bathtub; different in French from the “w.c.” or room with the toilet]

DeSCHAUB: Bathroom, that's it, yes. A big mouse — she didn't pay any attention. I said, “No, I don't think that's for us.” Anyway, we came back, and we settled for the town house with the room for her. She could leave all her things in that room, and we locked it — she was satisfied.

In that house — Mr., or Mrs. Biddle's son [who] was in the Red Cross — he and his sister, both, gave several ambulances to the Poles [wounded Free Polish soldiers]. While we were there, the war [May 1940 German invasion of France] was on — and those poor Poles had such miserable equipment, and were at the end of their lives. Three or four men came one night, Poles, uniformed, tattered, looking like death! And they sat there in the hall, and I said to Ted, “Who are they?” He said, “That's all they have left of their regiment.” It was ghastly.

Q: This was in Angers?

DeSCHAUB: In Angers, yes.

Q: The house you stayed at in Warsaw, was that more luxurious than the one in Angers?

DeSCHAUB: By then, we were out of Poland. We had to get out, after they bombed it! They bombed that castle that was [unintelligible] to the Biddles in town, and they bombed

it thoroughly, and it was — I always find [the word] in French — the Military Attach# of the Germans, who had been there for several dinners, directed the bombing. It was completely flat. [It had been] a beautiful place [with] a beautiful library.

Q: But when they bombed that, weren't -

DeSCHAUB: None of us was there. We had been evacuated.

Q: Wasn't it bombed with some duds, before you evacuated?

DeSCHAUB: No, not that I know.

Q: That was a different place?

DeSCHAUB: Must have been a different place. [pause] The Dutch?

Q: [Not understanding that she'd misheard "duds" for "Dutch"] I'd heard a story that the Ambassador was at one of the houses — maybe the villa in Konstancin?

DeSCHAUB: Yes, he was, that's true. That belonged to the Dutch, but I don't think it was any embassy. They just were evacuated there and put there, thinking it might be a safe place. Then Genie [McQuatters] had that terrible trip, down to Romania. I was in Paris, by then, and I always called the Embassy to ask where they were and what was happening? They were very nice, and I was told, "They're coming, they're coming. They've found some kind of train that will go through Italy and then up to France. You can meet them there and they will tell you what they saw." I waited there, and there they came. They all looked quite normal, I'd say, but they were exhausted. Our dear friend, Charles Wright - maybe Genie told you about him?

Q: Charles Wright? [thinking she was meaning Morley/Moszczynski]

DeSCHAUB: Charles Wright, that was his name. Wright. No? [after negative response from Baxter] He was an Englishman, of course, and he was Mr. Biddle's — guard, if you can give it that name — he was there long before we went to Warsaw. I was with them in Oslo — that was Mr. Biddle's first post — then in Warsaw.

I was in Paris when the bombing started in Warsaw. We could still call each other. Mrs. Biddle called me and she said, “Don't try to come. You'd have to come through Germany, God knows. Just stay there and keep in touch with the Embassy, and they will let you know,” which they did. Of course, that was a terrible time.

Q: What about Mr. Charles Wright, then?

DeSCHAUB: Charles Wright stayed with them in Warsaw, and was evacuated. And then he stayed in Poland — don't ask me why. He had a terrible time. He had something [wrong] with his eyes — he could hardly see — and the medical service in Warsaw was not at all good. He saw a doctor and he finally lived [with] a Polish doctor's family until, I suppose, Genie took him on, when she went further. She went with her car to Romania — and there they picked up Charles Wright.

Q: He left separately down to Romania?

DeSCHAUB: Probably, probably — that I don't remember. He was with them when they arrived in Paris, I know that.

Q: Right. How did you get to Paris earlier? Did you have a mission that you had to go with?

DeSCHAUB: I had to do something for Mrs. Biddle or the children - I don't remember. Anyway, she told me, “Stay - don't come - don't come.” I would have gone to Warsaw to be with them, but they said no. So I stayed there, and there they arrived. It was marvelous to see them again. You don't know, in a war, what happens. They had a hard time. Probably

Genie told you, they were reported wherever they stopped for the night. Any little village — a few hours later, they were bombarded. They were reported — they [the Germans] knew all the numbers of their cars — they knew everything — German or Russian, I don't know which ones. It was a very bad time.

Q: Then, did you leave with the Biddles back to the United States, fleeing through Spain and Portugal?

DeSCHAUB: Yes, yes. But that was when Genie went — it was Mr. Biddle's idea — Genie was sent with him to England; that's when she went to England. “Oh,” Mrs. Biddle said, “You can't go, you can't go.” I said, “Why?” She said no, because Peggy was expecting her first baby. “I wouldn't have any news, maybe, and it's better that you stay with her — she'll be very lost, you know, without her family.” And so [cut off]

Q: That was in Washington, you stayed?

DeSCHAUB: No. She stayed — Mrs. Biddle bought a little place for her, very nice — in Maryland. That's where she was, though she had the baby in Washington, of course. That was her first one.

Q: Mrs. Biddle had gone on with her husband?

DeSCHAUB: Yes, yes, she had gone to London. But all the time we had communications. I was never lost — if she wanted this or if she wanted that. Genie told you, of course, London was a terrible place at the time. They didn't get good food — they didn't get this, they didn't get that — so I had to send all that, as much as I could. Cocoanut, and [unintelligible] was very, very big. And writing — it was all right [that] it was censored — we knew that we shouldn't say anything political. Genie probably didn't tell you: by chance, I once had sent little tubes of onion, or some type of condiment. So I sent one of those [unintelligible] that was all. And the cook at the Ritz was so enchanted to hear about me [that] he said, “Could you have some more sent? 'Cause I have a client, he would just [be]

in heaven if he could have some of it." They didn't have any of it! So I sent some of them [unintelligible] — and he took them and gave them to the client. It's strange what takes value at some time, when nothing else counts.

But in France, it wasn't bad. It was cold — it was very cold in winter. It was exceptionally cold because, I remember that one night, I was coming home — I had had a little supper, I don't know where — and [when] I came home, I had to hold on to the side of the houses because it was so slippery [since] it was all ice!

Q: This was in Angers?

DeSCHAUB: No, Paris. By then, I was in Paris. Mrs. Biddle had this house there, still, and guardians, and one dog. [laughs] I was there all alone for quite a while, in that big house on the second floor. But they were very nice, the guardians, both of them — a husband and a wife. She would often just cook a little soup or something for me. It was not pleasant to go out and walk dark streets, you know! There were no lights! Not so long ago, I heard that they lived somewhere in the south of France, that couple who lived in that house and were the guardians of Mrs. Biddle's house. They were still alive, I was surprised to hear.

Q: Did you get back — did you think you would ever get back to Poland, after the War? Did Ambassador Biddle hope to go back to a free Poland after the War?

DeSCHAUB: I know that [Third Secretary, C. Burke] Elbrick went back. Very soon after you could go, he went. I said, "Oh, I envy you. Couldn't you put me somewhere on the list?" A very small group of Americans went to Poland. He said, "It's not too bad. They have reconstructed a lot. Especially the old quarters were all redone, and very well done." But places we [had known] were gone forever. He said the hotel, where we had lunch on Sunday, was still there, which was very good. And this Mr. Wright really saved my life because I could always ask him to do this, or help me with that. A man could do it — for a woman it was difficult.

Q: That was before, when you were in Warsaw?

DeSCHAUB: Before, yes, before Poland was invaded. I feel very sad when I think of Poland. Such a terrible destiny, they have always had. They're very courageous people.

Q: Yes [agreeing]. Did you know, in Oslo, that you were — that Ambassador Biddle was going to be posted in Poland?

DeSCHAUB: Yes, we did, after a while. We were there for two and a half years in Oslo. And such a contrast, you can't imagine! Oslo is a very rural place — they like sports [unintelligible] and skiing and [ski-] jumping and all. They are quite rough when you don't know them, and they don't make any ceremony about being nice or pleasant. No, not at all. Except we had a few that were nice. I knew the Swiss Ambassador there, who was a very nice, unmarried man. From time to time, he invited me with another Swiss — who was a convert to Catholicism — and he played the accordion very well. We would sing little Swiss songs, and that was very nice. I went there quite often. But he had converted and become a monk — he was in a Catholic and very nice order —

Q: Franciscan?

DeSCHAUB: No, no, not so strict — they're more learned.

Q: Jesuit?

DeSCHAUB: No. I don't know what he was. He didn't speak about religion, so that was all right, and we got along very well. I went several times and saw him, and I went to church where he was. But of course, it was very rare, the monks, especially in Norway! Norway used to be a very Protestant country.

Yes, we knew quite a few months in advance, of course, that we would have to go to Poland. And then Poland was such a complete change! Everything — the way people

thought, the way they treated each other, you know. It was really, I would say, three of four hundred years back, in Poland - life had stopped at that time.

Q: Was there much — was there an overall sympathy for the Nazis at all?

DeSCHAUB: No, no, no — first of all, [they were] Catholic, very strong Catholics. So strong, that we were told — I had this friend who was there in Oslo with me, and who left because she was [unintelligible], she got very sick; she had to be operated [on] and so, I finally was the one that [unintelligible]; she said — she tried to find a Protestant church. They said, “Church, no. There's a home where you can go, somewhere you can go where there is a priest,” or whatever you call him — Father. So I went once, and it was such a small congregation — there were maybe 40 people, maybe not. Did you know they [the Polish Government] didn't allow the Salvation Army? Didn't allow any thing that wasn't Catholic! There was this altar at Czestochowa — this old, famous Black Madonna that they had to worship. For them, this was the highest thing on the earth! Maybe that was why they were resigned to so much, that they could stand so much misery. Because they were miserable.

There was still a horrible difference between master and servant. [exclamation of wonder] I mean, not only would he [the guard] would sleep at the foot of my staircase! But otherwise, when we went to the country — to the Potocki country place which Mr. Biddle had rented — we went there, the servants were all waiting for us, and they would kiss the hem of your skirt! Not your hand, but the hem of your skirt! They would kneel down — it was embarrassing, but what could you do? They thought that was the right thing to do. And the master did whip his servants, and whip them good and strong! One time, the head man of all the servants couldn't function — he wasn't there. We asked what happened to him and were told, “Oh, the master had a 'discussion' with him.” He was in bed, [because] he had been whipped!

Q: That was a “discussion”?!

DeSCHAUB: And that, after Norway where they are so rude, it was a tremendous difference.

Q: So there weren't many Polish Communists either?

DeSCHAUB: At the time, no. At that time, I don't think they could have lived! And there were no black people, none at all. I don't think there are many in Sweden or Norway [either].

Q: Were there any other American women in Warsaw?

DeSCHAUB: Why, yes, the ones belonging to embassies and so on — quite a few. Quite a few, [though] I don't know if they were happy. In Norway, there was a [pause] — we had Burke Elbrick in Norway — he was there. That's where I first met him.

Q: And he moved at the same time as Ambassador Biddle to Warsaw?

DeSCHAUB: Yes, we were in Oslo quite a while, and he was — I don't know — Secretary of the Embassy — he didn't have a very big title there. His wife expected a baby at that time, and — I think — she went back to Washington to have the child. Then they came to Warsaw, and there I had to find a house for them. That was a very nice little house, what they would call a manor, you know, [with] it was more than the house [attached to it]. But it was in bad shape. Those people had a daughter — she thought she'd do everything. So she installed electric lights, and [pause] — Burke and Elfie always complained that it was terrible: the lights went out all the time, or something burned up — but that was the daughter of the house. It was a very nice place. They had some sheep — I was there in spring, once, and the little lambs were jumping. At the end of the garden was a little place where you could look off and see them, and it was so nice and peaceful!

Q: So you mostly worked outside of the Embassy itself? You didn't work in the Embassy?

DeSCHAUB: I didn't work in the Embassy at all — that was not my territoire. I was mostly at the house, later. It always ended that way. I would have a little place [unintelligible] — I had this friend from Paris, and we had a little apartment. It was nothing to speak about, but at least it was ours. I remember, I had some birds — bought some birds, to have something alive — and that was when my friend had to go to the hospital, when Mrs. Biddle sent her to Vienna. Then Mrs. Biddle said to me, “You're not going to be alone — you're coming to the Embassy.” [laughs]

So I had to move to the Embassy. I wasn't there very long, when I had some [kind of] rash — something I had never had before. Mrs. Biddle said, “Oh, get the doctor!” and she went and got the doctor. He said, “This is — 'red dogs',” they call it in Norwegian, 'red dog' — which is a particular form of — what do you call it when you get red spots all over you? [after Baxter's prompt] Measles. [mocking a scared voice] “Measles -oh, oh! You must be isolated, so that nobody can come and see you.” But Mr. Wright said he'd go anyway and see how I was. And I was there, covered with powder — I don't know why that powder. I had a nurse come, and my door was locked to anybody — and he came and saw me covered with this powder and looking [unintelligible] — He said, “I've never seen you look so —” [laughs] But anyway, that was the way it was done.

Q: That was in Oslo?

DeSCHAUB: In Oslo, yes. I can't say I liked the way we lived in Oslo, because it was really kind of dull — very, very dull. There were concerts — one in a long time. And then, they had a theatre, but of course, it was Norwegian, so I didn't like to go. But it was very lonesome, so I was very glad to have that old Englishman to go out with, or sometimes go to a — not even a movie, but some type of — concert, or whatever.

Q: That was Charles Wright?

DeSCHAUB: Yes, oh yes. He was our savior in many things.

Q: He was attached officially to the Biddle family, or was he part of the — did he work for the Embassy?

DeSCHAUB: No — he was Mr. Biddle's - the Ambassador's —

Q: Personal attach#?

DeSCHAUB: Yes. Very efficient. He arranged everything, excursions and — [long pause]

Q: So your social life improved, going to Warsaw?

DeSCHAUB: Oh yes. I think life improved greatly, yes. [unintelligible] Oh, those poor things. I have a cousin — a Swede, he was an officer in the Swedish Army during that time — and he went to Poland. He said those poor things in the country — they had lovely castles, they had silver, they had beautiful things — they practically sold it for nothing, just to have something to eat! They had a hard time.

Q: That was during the war?

DeSCHAUB: Yes. They had many Swedes sent to Poland and to all those countries — I suppose they had to report what was going on.

Q: During the war or after?

DeSCHAUB: Probably after the war. Yes, because yes, they had no reason to go to Poland otherwise.

Q: Right. How did you start with the Biddle family? [pause] You were born in Switzerland, and came over here?

DeSCHAUB: I was born in Paris — because my parents were in Paris then — so I was born in Paris, and then my father had built a house in Switzerland, just next to my paternal

grandfather's house. We went every summer, and I would go to school there — so that was [in] German — and then I would to Paris, later, so my education was more [in] French.

Q: And then you met the Biddles in Paris?

DeSCHAUB: Yes. I had this friend who later she came to Oslo with us, and she was the one who knew the Biddles, she and her sister. She wrote to me — and I found, the other day in my old papers, the telegram she sent. She'd said, “You could come and stay with the Biddles for a school year, because the children are coming.” Mrs. Biddle was divorced, and she had already obtained the permission to have the children. They were coming, and were by then already twelve, seven and nine — something like that — a difficult age, and they were taken away from their father and from their life here [in the U.S.]. She knew it would be difficult, and she was not particularly fond of children. She said, “They are arriving, and would you be willing to stay for a school year? We'll be half in the States, and half in Paris. You should meet them and see, if you like.”

That's how it started. I spoke to a very dear aunt I had, who said, “Oh, you must accept — for a school year, what's that?” I said, “I don't think I should go.” Finally, she said, “Do it for a school year,” so I did. I met them and the way it started, I might tell you, it's so strange and ridiculous. They had rented a house in Paris — with a garden; it was very nice — and they said, “Come for tea.” So I came for tea, not knowing what to expect! They both were there, and they said, “Oh, let's go walk in the garden and walk around and then we'll have tea.” So that's what I did, and we talked about this, and that — and not a word about anything!

[At this point the tape ran out; remainder of DeSchaub's story taken from Baxter's notes: The Biddles didn't mention employment to DeSchaub, who left rather disappointed and thinking she didn't have the position. DeSchaub later heard from some friends, however, that the Biddles thought she was wonderful and were expecting her to start taking care of the children right away. DeSchaub never did figure out why the Biddles hadn't mentioned

the job during her “interview” but she nonetheless accepted the job, which she would end up holding for a quarter century!]

Notes:

Baxter, then a graduate of Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, conducted the original interview as part of a Columbia oral-history project, which demanded that the transcript be produced as accurately as possible, for the sake of authenticity. Upon seeing the transcript in this format, however, Miss McQuatters refused to approve the transcript, as she preferred that Baxter rewrite the transcript as a smooth-flowing narrative (something he could not do, for the sake of Columbia's guidelines). The transcripts remained officially unapproved, therefore, until March 2002, when Baxter (by then a Ph.D. in History from University of California at Irvine) contacted McQuatters and DeSchaub and persuaded them to approve the transcripts in original form. Additional footnotes (coordinated with the 1976 book mentioned in the interview) and biographical sketches were added at that time, after further telephone conversations between Baxter and McQuatters.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH of EUGENIA McQUATTER— R.W. Baxter, March 2002

Born in Hillsboro, Texas on July 14, 1904, Eugenia “Genie” McQuatters moved with her family to Dallas, El Paso and finally Los Angeles, where she was raised after the age of ten. She attended St. Catherine's (Roman Catholic) School during junior high, then the Marlborough School for Girls to complete her high-school education. Starting college at the University of Southern California, she briefly transferred to a school in the Midwest but hated the cold and soon returned to USC, where she received her Bachelor of Science degree in c.1928.

After traveling with female friends around France, she applied to the University of Paris (c.1930) and began work on her doctoral thesis (never completed) at the Sorbonne. Her interest in international politics and foreign cultures led her to apply for work in the U.S.

diplomatic corps. She was soon accepted as a clerk and began service in Warsaw, Poland in late 1936, shortly before the arrival of Ambassador A.J. Drexel “Tony” Biddle (1896 - 1961) in 1937.

Following the Nazi-Soviet invasion of Poland in September 1939, Genie evacuated with Ambassador Biddle and his staff to Angers, France, where the Polish government set up operation in exile. When the American ambassador to the last non-fascist French (Reynaud) government, William Bullitt, was called back to the U.S. for consultations, Biddle served double duty as the deputy American ambassador to France, through the regime's final weeks. When France fell in June 1940, Biddle (from Paris) ordered his staff to move from Angers to Bordeaux; once Biddle joined them, they traveled overland via Spain to Lisbon, Portugal. From there, the Biddles took the first available ship to the U.S. (full, due to the large entourage of the Duke & Duchess of Windsor) while Genie, Mrs. DeSchaub and other embassy/family staff members enjoyed a two-week vacation of sorts until the same ship returned and brought them Stateside.

Once in the U.S., Ambassador Biddle spent a few weeks campaigning for Roosevelt's third term (fall 1940), with Genie as one of his assistants. They conducted a lecture tour about the Polish-German conflict in various Polish communities around the country, chiefly in the Midwest and East Coast. Soon after the President's reelection, Genie journeyed with the ambassador (as his confidential secretary) to London, where the latter had been named ambassador and/or minister plenipotentiary to seven exiled governments in Europe (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Luxembourg, Norway, Yugoslavia and Albania), as well as ambassador to the Free French regime. [In 1944, Biddle retired from the State Department and accepted a commission from the U.S. Army as a lieutenant. He remained in Europe after the war, serving at the Allied headquarters and later as assistant to the Army Chief of Staff. Biddle ended his distinguished career back in the diplomatic corps, as newly appointed U.S. Ambassador to Spain, shortly before his unexpected death at age 64 in late 1961.]

By 1942-43, Genie had not been home since the mid-1930s (she wasn't able to visit her family during Biddle's 1940 U.S. lecture tour) and, since the death of her parents, her siblings needed her to handle various matters on the West Coast. She therefore requested “home leave” from the State Department, and ultimately resigned when business kept her stateside for longer than she had planned. Ultimately, she was reinstated to the Department, and was sent to Egypt on a foreign economic mission at a time when the Allies were preparing to invade Greece. Facing a “pretty grim situation” in Cairo (as she recalled in March 2002) following the assassination of the proposed head of the tripartite US-UK-French mission, the team was soon withdrawn, and Genie was sent back to Washington, DC.

After D-Day and the Liberation of France, Genie returned to Paris as assistant cultural attach#, and in 1945 joined the nascent United Nations team (in London) to construct a constitution for the UN's education department, or UNESCO. Completed at Paris' Hotel Majestic in 1946, the project led to Genie staying on with UNESCO's relief and rehabilitation section (which handled numerous other departments' requests). After the end of her first year, she was sent to UNESCO's first conference in Mexico, as assistant to the (Polish) head of the relief and rehabilitation section. Once back in Paris, she found that she had “had enough fooling around,” so she “resigned and came back as a free person” to the States (in her phrasing, in March 2002).

Since her old friend Ella DeSchaub had settled in New York City, Genie traveled there to visit Ella and her longtime employer, Mrs. Biddle (then divorced from the ambassador). At that time (c. late 1940s), Mrs. Biddle's mother (Mrs. William Boyce Thompson) had just passed away, with the immense family house along the Hudson in need of cleaning out. Mrs. Biddle hired Genie to assist with the project, and afterwards kept her on as her additional assistant. Genie continued as Mrs. Biddle's assistant for many years, traveling with her around Europe and also to North Africa. After Mrs. Biddle died (late 1956 or early

1957), Genie retired to an apartment on Madison Avenue in New York City, where she has since lived and maintained close contact with Ella DeSchaub.

Genie was 87 when Baxter interviewed her, and, at age 97 could still recall vividly her years of service in the U.S. State Department and United Nations.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH of ELLA DeSCHAU— R.W. Baxter, March 2002

Born of Swiss and French parentage as Ella Louise Graf in Paris, France, on Jan. 14, 1897, Ella was raised in Paris but frequently visited the Swiss estates of her mother's family, the noted Tobler chocolate makers. In the early 1920s, on one of her trips to Switzerland, Ella met an artist, Andr# GRAF (born in Switzerland but raised in Czarist Russia, where he had been pressed into army service in 1914, was captured by the Bolsheviks in 1918, set to be executed, but escaped and returned to Switzerland). As per the noble traditions of the 19th century, Andr# deemed himself unworthy to ask her hand in marriage until he could support her in the manner to which she was accustomed. He therefore left for New York City, where he eventually established himself as a cover artist for the New Yorker and other high-society magazines of the day (some originals of which, in the 1990s, Ella deposited with the New Yorker archives). In 1926, Andr# finally asked Ella to marry him, a nuptial which occurred in New York City and which tragically ended only one year later with his death in an accident.

Returning to Paris, Ella eventually found lasting employment (by the early 1930s) with Margaret Thompson SCHULZE (1900 - 1956/57), daughter of a wealthy American copper-mining magnate (William Boyce THOMPSON), and who, in 1931, became the second wife of A. J. Drexel BIDDLE (1896 - 1961), scion of the Philadelphia family of Revolutionary War fame, ardent Roosevelt supporter since 1930, and (after 1935) Minister Plenipotentiary to the American Legation to Norway, as well as (after 1937) U.S. Ambassador to Poland. Ella served as nanny to the two Schulze children (Nicholas “Teddy” and Margaret “Peggy”). She personally tutored Peggy from the time the girl

was seven (with Nicholas being tutored by an Englishman), later helped plan Peggy's marriages (first to the Polish-Austrian Prince Alexander “Alec” HOHENLOHE [c.1939 or 1940], and then to the American financier, Morton DOWNEY [c.1950s]) and assisted in raising Peggy's children (by Alec).

On the diplomatic level, Ella also became a valued and close member of the Biddle family. Since she spoke French, German & English perfectly (with a working knowledge of Italian and a smattering of other languages), she was included in the Biddle's many state-level dinners, not merely as translator but also as an intellectual equal in political and cultural discussions. An excellent writer, she served as Mrs. Biddle's personal secretary, handling all her correspondence.

Ella was in Paris at the time of the Nazi invasion of Poland, but rejoined the Biddles after their evacuation and arranged housing for the embassy staff and Biddle family in Angers. In the summer of 1940, she evacuated with them (via Bordeaux & Lisbon) to the U.S., but soon returned (to London) with them for the remainder of the war. Ella remained with Mrs. Biddle after her post-war, amiable divorce with the Ambassador. The family shuttled back and forth between the U.S., their estate in Crans-sur-Sierre, Switzerland, and in France (including a house in Paris which had formerly housed the Australian Embassy). In New York City, Mrs. Biddle maintained a set of four apartments in a co-op on the prestigious Upper East Side — an apartment each for herself, her daughter (Peggy), for Peggy's children, and for Ella.

After Mrs. Biddle's unexpected death (in late 1956 or early 1957, of an aneurism at age 56, during a trip to Paris), Ella helped maintain the family's set of apartments in New York City for another couple of years, but by c. 1960, Mrs. Biddle's two children were well established in Washington, DC, and in Florida. Ella then retired, and has lived since in her own apartment in New York City and has maintained her (now 65-year) friendship with Genie McQuatters.

Ella was 94 when Baxter interviewed her in 1991. She suffered a stroke and loss of some speech in 2001, but celebrated her 105th birthday in January, 2002.

APPENDIX on Charles Moszczynski/MorleyFrom Randolph Baxter's Mar. 11, 2002 telephone interview with Ruth (Mrs. Charles) Morley:

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, in July 1913 to Polish-born parents, Charles “Charlie” Moszczynski [phonetically: mosh-CHIN-ski] learned “kitchen Polish” and was a Ph.D. student in European history at the University of Wisconsin who came to Warsaw to conduct research in July 1938. He had viewed himself as Polish-American until he arrived in Warsaw — after that, he realized how distinctly American he was!

When the Nazis invaded Poland, he went to the American Embassy for help getting home. Ambassador Biddle asked if he could drive his Cadillac; Charlie would later recount how Biddle was unable to drive his large car in reverse, and thus preferred to have a more experienced driver at the wheel during the evacuation voyage, though Biddle did help keep Charlie awake during the long trip [not surprisingly, Mrs. Morley did not recall her husband's having mentioned the bird-attack incident that Ms. McQuatters vividly and scornfully remembered!]. Everyone had only taken one suitcase, believing they would be back after the war.

When the entourage reached Paris via Romania, Moszczynski stayed on with the staff of the American Embassy to Poland, which had set up its new headquarters in Angers, France. He left in March 1940 for the U.S., completed his doctorate from the University of Wisconsin, and married in 1945. Anglicizing his name as Charles Morley, he taught Russian and Eastern European history for many years at Ohio State University (including one of the first Polish history courses in the U.S.); he returned to Warsaw only in the mid-1950s, and was unable to recognize the city. In 1974, he wrote the forward to the compilation of Biddle's material and assisted in arranging its publication by the Ohio State University Press (1976).

Morley retired as vice-chair of the history department in the early 1980s; deaf and suffering from the early stages of Alzheimers in March 2002, he lives with his wife of 57 years in Columbus.

In her March 5, 2002 telephone interview with Randolph Baxter, Genie McQuatters noted that Moszczynski/Morley, seems to have exaggerated his position vis-g-vis the U.S. embassy in the late summer of 1939.

Some of this can be attributed to the casual nature of the term “staff”, even Ambassador Biddle off-handedly remarked that Moszczynski was “a member of my staff,” referring to his temporary evacuation entourage. Moszczynski was thus identified in the book's index as on the “American Embassy in Poland, staff' and claimed, himself that he had “joined the staff of the American Embassy in Warsaw” in “the summer of 1939.” Moszczynski/Morley did officially join the diplomatic corps, but only after Biddle had reached France; even then, his service was not lengthy — only six months after the evacuation from Poland.

In the summer of 1939, he was merely (in McQuatters' words) a “rather terrified” American civilian who had come to his nation's embassy asking for help to get home. The Ambassador agreed to include unofficially in the evacuation team since Moszczynski claimed he could drive Biddle's car. After they'd started off, though, at one point he almost wrecked the Ambassador's Cadillac — a bird flew in front of the car and Charlie thought it was an airplane strafing them, and swerved off the road in a panic. Biddle thereupon told him “move over” and drove the car himself, the rest of the way! [Mrs. Morley did not recall this episode].

End of interview